



U. S. Department of Justice
United States Attorney
Eastern District of Washington

PRESS RELEASE

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“TWO MOSES LAKE MEN SENTENCED FOR TRANSPORTING ILLEGALLY KILLED GRIZZLY BEAR”

Spokane – James A. McDevitt, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Washington, announced that Brandon D. Rodeback, age 26, and Kurtis L. Cox, age 30, both residents of Moses Lake, Washington, pleaded guilty and were sentenced this Monday, for transporting a grizzly bear that was illegally killed. Each was placed on 5-years probation with the condition that they forfeit the right to hunt for two full years, that they thereafter complete a hunter’s safety course, that they each pay a \$3,000 fine and that they pay restitution in the amount of \$14,857, jointly and severally, to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, for Endangered Species Recovery projects.

On October 1, 2007, Brandon Rodeback and Kurtis Cox were hunting in northeast Washington State, near Ione, in Pend Oreille County. They spotted and killed a grizzly bear in a designated Grizzly Bear Recovery Zone. Subsequently, they transported the grizzly bear to Moses Lake where it was skinned and later buried.

Since 1995, the area has been posted with signs warning hunters about the presence of grizzly bears and new signs were posted in September of 2007. Grizzly bears (*ursus arctos*) are also known as North American Brown Bears. They are listed as threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act and under Washington state law. It is a violation of the federal Lacey Act to transport any wildlife taken or possessed in violation of any federal, state or tribal law.

"With grizzly bear populations struggling to survive, every single bear is critical to the species' recovery," said Paul Chang, Special Agent in Charge of Law Enforcement for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Pacific Region, headquartered in Portland, Oregon. "This illegal killing is a set-back to state and federal efforts to protect this iconic species."

“When working to recover fish and wildlife species, any loss has a significant impact,” said Mike Cenci, deputy chief of enforcement for Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. “But this particular incident is even more unfortunate because we’ve lost a female grizzly – a vital member of a depleted bear population that produced offspring and never had a conflict with humans. She was important to the recovery of the species.”

This investigation was conducted jointly by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Enforcement Program and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service. This case was prosecuted by Earl Hicks, Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Washington.

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